

R E P O R T
RESPECTING THE
LUNATIC ASYLUM
OF
EDINBURGH,
FOR THE
YEAR 1818.

Presented by the Managers to the General Meeting of Contributors, held on the last Monday of January, in terms of the Royal Charter.

Monday, 25th January 1819.

Sir WILLIAM FETTES, Bart. in the Chair.

SINCE the Edinburgh Lunatic Asylum was opened for the reception of Patients in the year 1813, there have been admitted into it seventy-four unfortunate individuals; of these, thirty-two have been dismissed, either completely recovered from the mental affliction, to which they were subjected at the time of admission, or in such a state of re-convalescence, as to render confinement no longer

longer either necessary or proper. And the Managers have much satisfaction in being able to state to the Contributors, that continued observations of the effects resulting from the Asylum, affords them incontestible evidence of the benefit resulting from it, even on the very limited scale upon which it must at present be conducted, from only a small part of the intending building being completed.

They have, however, often occasion to regret, that from want of proper accommodation, they have been obliged to refuse admission into the Asylum, of many urgent cases, in very calamitous circumstances. From the want of funds, they have not been able to proceed with a part of the building which was begun some years ago, in the hopes, that aid from the benevolent would have enabled them to complete it. The completion and furnishing of this part would require a farther sum of five thousand pounds, in addition to what has already been contributed. But, if that money could be obtained, besides the reception of a greater number of Patients, even of some Mendicants, many additional conveniences would in different ways be acquired, tending both to the comfort and cure, of the limited number which can be admitted into the present buildings ; particularly larger rooms for exercise in bad weather.

At the commencement of the year 1818, there were twenty-seven patients in the Asylum, and
during

during the course of the year, seven more were admitted. Of these thirty-four, one died in the Asylum of a dropsical affection, four were for different reasons removed by their relations to other situations, and seven were restored to society with the world, in such a state of convalescence, that confinement was no longer considered to be necessary. The remaining twenty-two continued in the Asylum at the 1st of January 1819.

The Managers think it incumbent on them to report to the General Meeting of Contributors, that they have had every reason to be satisfied with the attention of the Physicians to the Asylum. The Medical Register affords incontrovertible evidence of the fidelity and humanity with which they have attended to the health of the patients, with a view to the removal both of their mental and bodily diseases. The Managers are persuaded, that in both these ways, the care and skill of the Physicians has been attended with the best effects.

Of the conduct of Mr HUGHES, the Superintendent of the Asylum, they are happy to make the same report as in former years. They have every reason to be satisfied with his humanity and attention in the discharge of every part of his duty. It is indeed true, that two patients, who have left the Asylum during the course of last year, have stated complaints against him. But after diligent inquiry, these complaints have appeared to the Managers to be totally groundless. Some of the
privations

privations of which these Patients complained, such as the want of the free use of pen, ink and paper on all occasions, of candles, and of razors, have their origin in the rules to which Mr HUGHES is subjected by the Managers ; and they are convinced, that these complaints arose solely from the patients alluded to, having left the Hospital before they were in a state of perfect re-convalescence. Other patients, completely restored to the use of reason in the Asylum, have returned to Mr HUGHES the most cordial acknowledgments for his humane attention. As far as the Managers have been able to learn, not one Patient has left the Edinburgh Asylum fully recovered from his unfortunate calamity, who has not gratefully acknowledged the benefit and the blessings he derived from it.

The conduct of the Matron, and of the under keepers, both male and female, during the year 1818, has been such as to merit the approbation of the Managers.

Subscriptions for the Edinburgh Lunatic Asylum are received, and receipts granted, by ALEXANDER BONAR, Esq. Banker, at Messrs RAMSAYS, BONARS, and COMPANY, Royal Exchange. It is the intention of the Managers to finish that portion of the building which is already begun, as soon as money can be obtained for that purpose.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2017 with funding from
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b29344621>

